

Wm. Ainslie

57

A TRUE
REPRESENTATION
OF THE
RISE, PROGRESSE,
AND STATE
OF THE
PRESENT DIVISIONS
OF THE
CHURCH
OF
SCOTLAND.



LONDON,
Printed in the yeere 1657.

57

A TRUE
REPRESENTATION
OF THE
PRESENT DIVISIONS
OF THE
CHURCH
OF
SCOTLAND.

LONDON
Printed in the year 1687.



A TRUE
 REPRESENTATION
 OF THE
Rise, Progress, and State
 OF THE
 PRESENT DIVISION
 IN THE
 Church of SCOTLAND.



AS the Division and rent that is now in our Church, (once beautifull and strong in its unity and harmony, as a City compact together) is matter of sad lamentation to us; so it is a sharp and bitter pain to our spirits, to be making any mention thereof, or laying out the same before any, except in mourning and supplications before the Lord our God; acknowledging his righteous and holy judgement therein; confessing our provoking him to give us up to dash one against another, by not humble prizing of his mercy, but rather carnally glorying and confiding in our former unity, and not improving it as we ought, for his glory, and the promoting of his interests, and deprecating his wrath therein, lying so heavy upon us. We could heartily wish, that our breach, had it been the Lords good pleasure, being removed ere now, our differences had been buried in silence, and perpetual oblivion, rather then that we should be necessitated, yet to give an account thereof to the world: and we are so

B

much

§. 1:

much the more averse from representing these our differences, divisions, and the consequences which have followed thereupon, and the effects they have produced; that this cannot be done without some, yet too just reflection upon brethren, and their practices; with some of whom we have walked to the house of God in company, and whom we do still love and respect, sincerely wishing from our hearts, (as the Lord knoweth) that we might with them serve the Lord with one consent. Neverthelesse, considering how much we, and the truth through our sides have suffered, through mis-representations that are made of the state of our differences, and the foul aspersions cast upon this Church, and the servants and Ministers of Jesus Christ, who adhere to the publike judicatories thereof; and contend for the preservation of the government of the Church, in the due authority and subordination of judicatories, as by the good hand of our God in his great mercy, they have been settled amongst us, according to the Word of God: And perceiving that it is our Brethrens design in all this, either that they may find wayes to prosecute some extraordinary and irregular course for remedying of evils amongst us; or at least may keep matters in the confusion and disorder wherein they are, that men may do as seemeth good in their own eyes, in matters Ecclesiastick, without controulment from the Authority of the Ecclesiastick judicatories: We are necessitated for the undeceiving of these who desire information, and for the exoneration and freeing of our selves of all consequences that may follow in this Church, upon the continuance of our confusions through their misinformations, to give a true information, and lay open the state of our differences and present case of our Church.

§. 2.

For this end we shall hold forth, 1. The Rise of our Division, and what were the matters of our differences, that so the true state of the controversie betwixt us and our dissenting brethren, may be known. 2. Some of the irregular courses they have run into, and do practice, for strengthening of their party and faction. 3. What means

we

we have used, and what we have condescended unto, to gain them to union and conjunction with us in the judicatories of the Church, but without any successe.

Sect. 3. As for the first head, We shall not trouble men with ripping up the secret workings of that spirit of Division (which at last appeared in its own colours openly amongst us) in some of them, while as we were yet going along together, and there was no breach between our brethren and us. Albeit it is most certain, that before, even long before, that godly understanding men, who were upon publike judicatures, and had occasion to observe more nearly the wayes of some of our brethren; discerned therein principles and designs tending to that which afterward brake forth. But we shall not rip up these things; The conception of the spirit of Division was too long a being looked to, that it might have been crushed; it was now come to such maturity, that it wanted but an opportunity to break forth; which, for the punishment of the provocations of a sinful generation, was by the holy dispensation of divine providence, quickly brought to pass: For shortly after the stroke upon this Nation at *Dumbar*, cometh forth that Remonstrance, entituled, *The Remonstrance of the Gentlemen Officers and Ministers, attending the Western Forces*, containing matters of great importance, and which was the first matter of our publike Church-differences, and did produce the first open rupture and Division in the judicatures. Concerning which, these things would be observed and considered.

1. It is from this evident, to all impartial observers, That the Church judicatories were far from beginning this Division, by any resolutions of theirs (which are now charged upon us as a defection; and whereof our Brethren do make so much use to carry on their designs) yea, they were not so much as an occasion of this rupture: But while they are about their duty, and in the simplicity of their hearts, wrestling with the difficulties of the time on all hands; Our Brethren with some others, did contrive and bring to light this Remonstrance, desiring the

§. 4.

concurrence of the Commissioners of the Assembly in presenting it to the State: And albeit it did contain many points of highest concernment, and contrary unto the constant resolutions of both Church and State (as is after to be cleared) yet they would not lay it aside for any intreaty, and join with their Brethren, and the rest of the Nation; but did prosecute it with eagernesse and insolence, and upon that account did act in a separate way, from the judicatories and Forces of this Nation, till themselves were broken, and the Church and State cast upon all the difficulties which after followed, and particularly upon these resolutions which our Brethren do so much condemn.

§. 9.

2. If we consider the matter of that Remonstrance, it will yet further appear, that they began this rupture in the Church, and that not upon the account of the publike resolutions, which were not then in being: For in that Remonstrance, they do condemn, and propound that there might be an overturning of all the resolutions of the Church and State, taken by them for securing of Religion, in reference to the Supreme Magistrate, and that not only all along, since the beginning of our late Reformation, but more especially in the years 1649. and 1650. after the State had been purged by the seclusing of the Malignants, and the conclusions agreed upon, were more strict then any formerly; yea, and these who had a chief hand in that Remonstrance, were very active in carrying on these publike conclusions and determinations. From which it is evident, that they did begin a rent, by departing from the received principles of this Church, yea, and from what themselves did formerly judge a sufficient security to the cause of God, and a great mercy to obtain it: and accordingly, some of them were but a little before chiefly active in closing Treaties and Transactions upon these principles, who afterward endeavoured to overturn them. This may discover to the world, what a spirit it is which leads our Brethren in their way; seeing they can not only not acquiesce in the determinati-

ons

ons of the Supreme Authority of a Church or State, concerning matters of greatest concernment to both; nor content themselves with the exoneration of their own consciences, if they be not satisfied; but when themselves have agreed to these things, and have been chief contrivers of them, there can be no security given, but they will retract their judgements, and overturn them again: Which principle and way is inconsistent with the safety or standing of any humane society whatsoever. It is true, in their Remonstrance, and since, in their emissions to the world in print, they would lay the great stress of this alteration in their judgement and way, upon after discoveries of crooked wayes in managing of Transactions in pursuance of these principles, and of some particulars in these Transactions which were kept up from the judicatories; upon the knowledge whereof, they did see the evil and sin of these conclusions of Church and State. But if it were to any purpose to trouble the world with stories of matters of fact, we could easily demonstrate what a gaining trade they have made of misrepresentations of this kind; and in particular, that it is more then evident to all who are acquainted with these affairs, that these resolutions were faithfully managed, and full satisfaction obtained in all that was required previous to a conclusion, and that no particular (though in matters only upon the by, and that whereof they make so much noise, was only a person who was bred in the Church of England, his taking the Communion once kneeling, after he had entred on a Treaty) was kept up from these who now complain of it; nay, or from the Assembly it self, as will appear from the report given in to the Assembly, and is now in publick record. But waving all these, it is clear from their Paper emitted to the world, Entituled, *The Causes of the Lords wrath against Scotland*, that they do hold out the very resolutions and determinations of Church and State in these matters, previous to any conclusion, as the cause of the Lords controversy, against the Land. So that, assert what they please to gloss the mat-

ter, they have made a defection from the principles of this Church, and prosecuted the same with a rupture and separation.

§. 6.

3. What ever may be said of Supreme judicatories, and their power to recognise and re-examine their own conclusions; yet it would be considered, that the contrivers, presenters, and prosecutors of that Remonstrance, were but private men, or did it in a private capacity. They were some inferior Officers, Gentlemen, and Ministers attending some Forces, who took upon them to condemn acts and conclusions of Supreme judicatories unanimously concluded, many of themselves (as hath been said) being present, and not contradicting, but positively consenting thereunto; and that concerning matters of State, and civil Government, of greatest importance: Which any unbiassed and sober spirit will perceive to be a matter above their reach and station; especially to have condemned them by way of remonstrance, publickly emitted to the world, and presented to the State; without so much respect had to these judicatories, as once to desire them first to re-examine and take into consideration these acts and conclusions; yea, refusing to apply themselves to such a way as that, when advised and earnestly pressed thereunto, as more orderly, by some to whom they did communicate their design. And albeit, the Commissioners of the general Assembly were then sitting (to whom the management of publick affairs of the Church were committed) and who ought to have been consulted with in all weighty matters, especially when our Brethren did call in question the conclusions of the preceding Assembly; yet it pleased them not to own them in this matter; but of themselves, did by positive determination, contrary to the acts of the Assembly, prevent their advice. It is true indeed, after they had concluded the matter, they who were entrusted by the rest, did present the Remonstrance to the Commissioners of the general Assembly, desiring their concurrence in presenting it to the State; but withal, it is to be remembered, that when it was enquired, if they had any power

to change any thing in it: They answered, that though some expressions might be changed, yet they had no power, and were not to alter any thing of the matter of it, which was in effect, to obtrude their determinations upon the Church-judicatorie; As these things did evidence their small respect to the government of this Church, and their stretching themselves beyond their line, by determining in their private capacity, not only antecedently, but contrary to the conclusions of the Supreme judicatories; so divers of these who went a long with them in it at first, perceiving shortly after how divisive and destructive to al order that course was, did quickly withdraw from them, repenting that ever they had engaged with them.

Sect. 7. 4. What ever charity might have been allowed them, in presenting their thoughts upon these Transactions, or of other faults, for a testimony and exoneration of their own consciences, and desiring to have them redressed in an orderly way by the competent judicatories: yet this can no wayes be justified, that not only they second their Testimony with a separation, but in the close of the Remonstrance, they hold forth a Declaration, and avowing of engagements upon their hearts (these are the very words) before God, *if he shall lengthen their dayes, and take pleasure in them, to make them any way instrumental in his work, and for his peoples good and safety; That they shall, to the utmost of their power, endeavour to get these things remedied. according to their places and callings:* Which was a real and plain engaging, and banding of themselves together, to prosecute the matter of their Remonstrance by arms and force, it being certain that the most part of the Remonstrators then were in a military place and calling. And this, several passages in their carriage, before they were broken, did clearly enough evidence to be their purpose and intention. And the judgement of this Church of such divisive bandings of parties, hath been so well known, especially since the general Assembly. 1642. That our Brethren cannot free themselves of walking contrary to the established order of this Church in that their practice.

5. Albeit our Brethren, by this Remonstrance and

§. 8.

the prosecution thereof, had made a breach upon our sweet harmony and unity, and laid the foundation of all our following breaches; yet the Commission of the general Assembly was most tender and careful to prevent any breach upon it, as may appear by their tender carriage before they proceeded to give any sense upon the Remonstrance, and from the sense it self which they were afterward necessitated to give.

As to their carriage before, This in general may speak their tenderneſſe, that notwithstanding their just dissatisfaction and offence at these proceedings; and notwithstanding the present hard condition of the times did call for their present appearing against these dividing courses; yet they suspended from *October 24.* (which day the Remonstrance was given in) to declare their sense of it till *Novemb. 28.* More particularly, when they were frequently convened, *Novemb. 14.* to cognosce upon it at *Sterlin*, and had spent three dayes in conference and debates about it. They offered to our Brethren, That provided they would not require nor presse an answer to the Remonstrance from the State, but be content to leave it with and before them, as a Testimony for themselves of their mind and judgment of affairs; The Commission would forbear to give any sense upon it, and should endeavour and interpose with the State, that they would use the like forbearance; and accordingly one was sent to acquaint the prime Ministers of State with this overture, and they did so relish it, as they laid that business aside, till they should meet with the Commission. This overture and condescension agreed unto by our Brethren, as also that in the mean time they should forbear meddling with that debate in publike preaching, was grossly violated by our Brethren. For not only did these Ministers for the Remonstrance, who preached on the next Sabbath; publicly fall upon that debate before the people; but before the Commissioners could reach *Perth* (to which they had adjourned their meeting, on the Tuesday thereafter, that they might interpose with the State) they halted thither, and gave in a supplication to the State, (denying any acknowledgement of, or respect to the Supreme Magistrate, though there present) professing their adherence to the Remonstrance, and

and pressing a satisfactory answer to it. Wherein albeit they did neglect that peaceable overture, and walk contrary to their own condescensions; yet the State for six or seven dayes did follow all peaceable wayes of preventing a rupture; offering that the Remonstrance might lie as a testimony for these who had presented it, of their mind and judgement, and that if they would join with the rest of the Nation, they should declare nothing against it; but nothing prevailing with them, the State was necessitate to declare against it, and yet in so fair terms, as it could hardly have been expected a State should answer such a Paper in such a way.

As for the Commissions sense upon it, Three dayes after being spent in conference with them, and finding matters otherwise irremediable, and being called thereto by civil Authority, they judged themselves bound in conscience to give warning of that snare, and to clear themselves from being accessory to such a divisive course. It is true, the Presenters of the Remonstrance, did (after the State had passed their sense upon it) propound to the Commission, that they would forbear, till they acquainted these that sent them; but such a desire was then justly thought strange. For, 1. They had even now pressed the State, contrary to all our desires for an answer, and men could not see how that was consistent with their desiring now of a delay. 2. The matter had been long enough debated, and there had none of the prime contrivers thereof been absent all the while, that they needed to be sent for. 3. They did not at all desire a delay, that they might receive satisfaction in any of the particulars Remonstrated; that so they might alter it, in whole, or in part, but only that they might have a hearing to justify their resolutions therein, to be according to the Covenant. 4. The Commission being required by the State to give their judgement in it, after so many endeavours for an accommodation which had proven ineffectual, they could not be wanting in their duty in such a case; yet the sense which they did give upon it, will witness how tenderly they walked in the business; for herein

§. 10:

they do acknowledge what truths are held out in the Remonstrance, though they were not clear that they held them out in an orderly way: they do not at all reflect upon persons nor offer to censure them, nor declare them censurable; but do only declare their judgement of things contained in the paper; and though they find in it some inroachments upon the determinations of the general Assembly, as also their meddling with matters of State and Civil government, and their engaging themselves to in-deavour remedies in these things they remonstrate against; with all which (and because it is apt to breed division) they were dissatisfied; yet out of their tender respects to persons, they content themselves with declaring so far, & do forbear all further examination of it, expecting such satisfaction against their next meeting from the Remonstrators themselves as might prevent all further debate.

§. 11.

This Declaration, breathing so much meekness and moderation, although it had its wished effects in due time, in the most part of the Gentlemen engaged in that course; yet the Ministers who were Remonstrators, and were then present, and other Brethren with them were so enraged at it, that in a disorderly way they left the Commission (some of them not without threatening expressions) and never returned afterward to any meeting thereof.

§. 12.

The next matter of our Church-differences and divisions, were the so much talked of, publique-resolutions of the Commissioners of the general Assembly, returned in answer to two queries propounded to them by the King and Parliament. The one concerning the admitting of Persons to the Forces then a levying, for the defence of the Land, of the date *Decemb. 14. 1650.* Wherein, after a repetition of the query propounded to them, and a Narrative of the States obligation to use all lawful and necessary means for the defence of the Land, of the broken and scattered condition of the Forces of the Kingdom, and the subduing of a great part thereof, disabling the rest from their own defence, unlesse there be a more general calling forth of the people: The conclusion and resolution is this,

In this case of so great and evident necessity, we cannot be against the raising of all sensible persons in the Land, and permitting them to fight against this enemy for defence of the Kingdom; excepting such as are excommunicate, forsaulted, notoriously prophanes or flagitious, and such as have been from the beginning, and continue still, or are at this time, obstinate and professed enemies, and opposers of the Covenant and cause of God; and for the capacity of acting that the estates of Parliament ought to have, as we hope they will have special care, that in this so general concurrence of all the people of the Kingdom, none be put in such trust or power as may be prejudicial to the cause of God; and that such Officers as are of known integrity and affection to the cause, and particularly such as have suffered in our former Armies, may be taken special notice of.

The other resolution was concerning the admitting of persons to places of trust in the State, and the rescinding of the Act of Classes, of the date May 24. 1651. Wherein after the repetition of several desires of the King, Parliament, and Committee of Estates, renewed with great earnestness (for the space of two Months) to the Commission for a clear and positive answer to the query propounded concerning that matter: It is declared as followeth, Least any aspersion should be cast upon us of incroaching upon, or intruding our selves unto the Office of the civil Power and Authority; we do declare, that we do not assume to our selves, and that it is not competent to us but only to the King and Parliament, to make or repeal Acts of Parliament; and therefore, that as the Commission of the Kirk had not hand in making of the Act of Classes, so neither do we take upon us, to determine the keeping up, or rescinding, or repealing of the same; yet being required by his Majesty, and Estates of Parliament, to give our judgement and advice in point of conscience; whether or not, considering the ground contained in the Narrative of the Act of Classes, viz. The solemn league and Covenant, the solemn acknowledgement of sins and engagements to duties, Declarations emitted by the Kirk, and the engagement and promise made by the Committee of Estates, to the Kingdom of England; It be sinfull and unlawfull to admit to be members of the Committee of

§. 13.

Estates, persons formerly debarred from the publique trust, or
 to rescind and repeal the Acts of Classes. We declare, that as
 for any engagement or promise made unto the Kingdome of Eng-
 land, concerning not admittin^g unto places of power and trust,
 persons accessary unto the sinful engagement, against that King-
 dome, we know nothing of the nature or grounds thereof, and
 therefore leaves it to the Estates of Parliament themselves, to con-
 sider how it doth oblige or not oblige in the present condition of
 affairs in these Kingdomes: But for the solemn League and
 Covenant, the solemn acknowledgement and engagement, and
 former Declarations, we do find that they do not particularly
 determine any definite measure of time, of excluding persons from
 publique trust, for by-past offences, but only binds and obliges
 condignely to punish offenders as the degree of the offence shall re-
 quire or deserve, or the supreme judicatory of the Kingdom, or
 others having power from them for that effect, shall judge conve-
 nient, to purge all judicatories and places of power & trust, and to
 indoeavour that they consist of, and be filled with such men as are
 of known good affection to the cause of God, and of a blameless and
 Christian conversation (which is a morall duty commanded in
 the Word of God, and of perpetual obligation) so that nothing
 upon the account of these grounds, doth hinder, but that persons
 formerly debarred from places of power and trust for their offen-
 ces, may be admitted to be members of the Committe of Estates,
 and the censure inflicted upon them by the Acts of Classes may
 be taken off, and rescinded without fin by the Parliament, whose
 power it is to lengthen or shorten the time of such censures, ac-
 cording as they shall find them just and necessary; provided they
 be men who have satisfied the Kirk for their former offences,
 have renewed or taken the Covenant, and be qualified for such
 places, with the qualifications required in the Word of God, and
 expressed in the solemn acknowledgement and engagement, viz.
 That they be men of known good affection to the cause of God, and
 of a blamelesse and Christian conversation; which ought always
 carefully to be observed and made conscience of, though there were
 no such Act of Classes, to the effect that no persons get such power
 and trust into their hands as may be prejudicial to the cause
 of God.

These

{These are the resolutions which have been, and are so much noised abroad in the world, because of which, our dissenting brethren have made such stirs in Preaching, and in writing, and Printed papers, determining them to be a horrid defection to our Covenants, and forsaking of the cause of God, and laying the weight of their first dividing from the rest of the Church and Countrey, upon these, (though unjustly, as may appear from what hath been cleared in the matter of the Remonstrance) yea, and branding honest men who concurred in them, or consented to them, with very odious imputations, and determining these resolutions to be the grand causes of the Lords wrath against the Land. Upon the account whereof they have separated from, and rent the judicatories of the Church, (the condition of the times contributing thereunto) and by their protestations, and declinations against the general Assemblies, the Church is brought into the confusions and distractions under which we do so sadly suffer. And albeit somewhat hath been already spoken, for vindicating us in this particular, in the observations upon the differences in the Church of Scotland, from page 10. to 17. And it is not our work in this Representation, to publish a Treatise in defence of these resolutions; yet we shall add a few things for clearing of the matter.

§ 14.

As to the former resolution of December 14. 1650. we need not insist to declare; That this debate is extrinsecal to our Doctrine, Worship, and Church-government; and therefore it cannot be justified that such a rent should be made because of our differences about it: That there was no question made by our Brethren, of the lawfulness of the service wherein these Forces were to be employed, which might have added weight to the grounds of their dissent: That the Country was really in that low condition, supposed in the resolution (occasioned partly by our Brethrens separation upon the account of the Remonstrance) which could not but put State and Church into great straits, and warrant them in their stations, to improve all ordinary means, not prohibited by the Word of God, and the use whereof is not in it self sinful, for necessary self preservations;
And

§ 15.

And that whatever latitude may be taken in such a case, yet the commission in their resolution, did use such caution, that if they be judged thereby (as they ought to be) there can be no defection fastened upon them, even by them who condemn a general concurrence of fellow subjects in cases of extremity; for in effect they approve of none to be admitted, but such as are professed friends to the cause of God, and who enter in Covenant for that effect. But passing all these, we desire it may be remembred, that our Brethren did not content themselves simply to condemn this resolution, or to assert that it was unlawful to take in or employ such as they are qualified in the resolution; But running to another extremity, did assert, that it was sinful and unlawful for any honest and godly Subjects, to go forth and joyn in an Army, constitute according to the resolution, albeit called and required thereunto by the Civil Magistrate, in the case of necessary defence of the Nation, and every particular interest in it. And in several papers did positively maintain this assertion, and by many arguments laboured to bear it in upon people. The grosse absurdity of both which assertions may be clearly seen in these few particulars.

§.16.

First, If we look upon all Nations and States throughout the world, it may justly seem a strange Paradox, and of dangerous consequence, if once admitted amongst them, That it is not lawful for the Civil Magistrate in the case of forraign Invasion, to raise an Army, as is qualified in the Resolution, for defence of the Nation; and much more, that it is not lawful for godly subjects to joyn with an Army so constituted. Yea, albeit that resolution was more limited and straight, upon grounds and reasons of expediency; yet we doubt not, but that in the case of the invasion of a Nation, by forraign force, and when the whole Nation is in common hazard, all Subjects and compatriots, as well those that are Orthodox Christians as others, though they were Idolaters, Jews, Turks, or Heathens, may be called forth; and that a conjunction of them in Armes, for the defence of the Commonwealth, and their own mutual preservation, is lawful, yea, and a necessary duty, to which the Magistrate ought

ought to call them, and wherein they ought to concur; especially when their conjunction altogether is in rational prudence, a mean necessary in ordinary providence, for their preservation from the violence of the invading powers.

§. 17.

As this is the universal and constant principle and practice of all States and Kingdoms, wherein there are such differences amongst Subjects (as most part of Nations have some one or other of these mixtures, and where there is most unity in Religion, yet most of the Subjects are carnal and prophane) and without which it were no great difficulty for an invader to make a prey of any such Kingdoms: (as suppose the Turk should invade *Germany*; so we find Christians and godly men in all ages and times have never questioned the truth of it, but by their practise have gone along with it. To passe the example of the primitive Church, where, in Christians were so far from making question of this, that a great part of the forces of the *Roman Empire* consisted of Christians, as *Tertullian* doth affirm: As also of Orthodox Christians in other Nations, who being joyned in civil Society, with others corrupt in Religion, do make no scruple of joyning in Armes with them; and who may justly resent the scandal cast upon Protestant Churches, by the starting of such a debate: We shall only mention the example of our own worthy Reformers, who in the case of forraign invasion made no scruple to joyn in Armes with those who had been in bloody opposition to the people of God, so soon as they were willing to come off from the contrary party, and profess repentance for their former courses. Witnesse their joyning with the Duke of *Chastelleraule* and his followers, who had been in opposition to the Congregation as they were then called. Yea, after some disaster received by the *French* at *Lieth* after that conjunction, they did not look upon the receiving of him, as a cause of that sad stroak, as some would make the world believe from Mr. *Knoxes* Sermon at *Sterlin*: For in the heads of that Sermon, Printed in the History of the Church of *Scotland*, Page 217. Edit. *Edinburgh*, 1644. in 4. there is no mention of any such thing, but only of their carnal confidence, that possibly they had

not

not sincerely repented their former opposition, and that they who were late come in, were made to feel in their own hearts, how bitter a cup they had made others to drink before them: nor doth he (as our Brethrens Tenets now lead them) presse them to purge out such as were lately admitted, but doth only presse repentance upon all of them.

§. 17.

But we need not insist on this, to instruct what was the judgement of our first Reformers in this matter, seeing before that time they invited even the very Papists, remaining yet Papists, to conjunction in Armes with them, against the Queen Regent, and the *French* party, as will appear from the Declaration recorded in the History of the Church of Scotland, Page 179. &c. Wherein as there are many things remarkable to our present purpose, so their exhortatory close speaketh thus, Page 182, 183. If you tender true Religion (*i.e.* if ye be Protestants) ye know her Majesty beareth her self plain enemy thereunto. If Religion be not perswasive unto you (*i.e.* if ye be Papists) yet cast not away the care ye have over your Commonwealth, which ye see manifestly and violently ruined before your eyes. If this will not move you, remember your dear Wives, Children and Posterity, your ancient heritages, &c. Then Brethren let us joyn our Forces, and both with wit and manhood resist their beginnings; let no man withdraw himself; and if any will be so unhappy and mischievous (as we suppose none to be) let us altogether repute, hold, and use him (as he is indeed) for an enemy to us and to himself, and to his Commonwealth. All which doth make it clear, that they made no scruple of joyning with Papists, being their Country men and compatriots, and that even when the quarrel with the enemy was complexe, both for the liberty of the Country and the interest of true Religion, they were content, and desirous that their Country men, though disaffected to Religion, should joyn with them upon the account of their common civil interest, as they also afterward expresse in another Declaration, recorded in the same History, Page 197. at the beginning.

§. 18.

Unto this judgement of our worthy Ancestors, speaking

so clearly to the point in controversy, we shall only add the Testimony of a late learned Writer, who in his Treatise, Entituled, *Lex, Rex*, Quest. 37. pag. 379. speaking of their opinion, who think, if the King command Papists and Prelates to rise against the Parliament of *England*, That we are obliged in conscience, and by our oath and Covenant, to help our native Prince against them: He subjoins, To which opinion, with hands and feet I should accord, if our Kings cause were just and lawful. And a little after in the same page, he adds, I see no reason but the civil Law of a Kingdom doth oblige any Citizen to help an innocent man against a murdering Robber, and that he may be judicially accused as a murderer, who faileth in his duty, &c. And afterward, page 382. after this supposition and assertion, If an Army of Turks and Pagans would come upon *Britain*, one part of *Britain* would help another, which includes more then the conjunction of fellow-subjects of one Kingdom: He addes, as *Jehoshaphat* the King of *Judah* did right in helping of *Ahab* and *Israel*, so the Lord had approved of the war; which may give a dash to the many objections mustered up from the Lords reproof to *Jehoshaphat*, against the Commissions Resolution.

Secondly, As the judgement and practice of Christians and Churches, in former and latter ages, at home and abroad doth justify this resolution; so the Law of nature doth strongly plead for us in this matter: For as in the natural body, nature hath put an instinct in all the members to put forth themselves for the preservation of the whole, and one of another; So the practical principles of nature, lay a moral obligation upon the members of a Political body, to join mutually together for the defence of the whole, and their own necessary self-preservation, when they are involved in a common hazard. So that in such a case, if the Magistrate do not put them to it, he betrayeth his trust; and the subjects, if they concur not, become guilty of the ruin of the whole; and as the Apostle, 1 Cor. 12. makes use of this beam of the light of nature, to enforce that there ought to be no schism in the mystical body of Christ, or his Church, but all

§. 20.

the members ought have a care of the whole body, and one of another; so by parity of reason it may be as strongly applied to the Political body and incorporation of a Commonwealth, in things necessary for the preservation of its being and safety, and to repell unjust violence. Nor will it suffice to say, that as the Law of nature, when it obligeth us to defend our selves for self-preservation, doth not allow us to make use of every mean for that end, but only of lawful means, which cannot be said of conjunction and association in arms with men corrupt in Religion, or ungodly in their conversation: For we reason not from the Law of nature obliging to self-preservation and defence, *simpliciter*, but from the Law of nature its obligation lying upon members of one and the same body, such as is the incorporation of one City, Kingdom or Commonwealth, in relation to the preservation of the whole, and of one another, when under the hazard of unjust violence and invasion. And so the argument speaks not only for the lawfulness of the end, or the defence and preservation of the Political body, but for the lawfulness also of the means, or the concurrence of all the members for that effect, which doth strongly infer our conclusion.

§. 21.

Thirdly, As this is the verdict of the Law of nature, so we cannot see any thing in the Scriptures contrary to this; And no wonder, seeing Gods Laws (such as the Law of nature also is) cannot be contradictory one to another. Yea, we will find in the word, clear warrant for this assertion. But not intending a Treatise, we shall only touch a few generals which may clear it.

§. 22.

And to begin with the old Testament, albeit, it need not be thought strange that we bring no Testimonies so directly speaking of conjunction and association in arms, betwixt the Professors of the true Religion and others of a differing Religion, as members of the same civil Incorporation, considering that the Church of God being restricted to that one people of Israel, their Church and Commonwealth were materially the same by Divine institution; So that none could be members of the Commonwealth, but

but such as were also members of the Church, and so professors of the true Religion, as now under the Gospel it may be otherwise; Yet even then we will find this truth, That albeit oft-times many of that Church did make defec-tion to wicked and (to speak so) malignant courses, yet were they never refused or rejected from Church or camp-fellowship, when they professedly returned from their evil courses, although there was no real evidence of true repen-tance and godliness appearing in them. How often in the time of *Moses* did they turn aside? and albeit he knew well the generality of them continued graceless, notwithstanding their professions of returning, *Dent. 29. 1, 3, 4.* yet were they never excluded from joining with the rest in their mili-tary undertakings. So also in the dayes of *David*, when Ten Tribes had for seven years shed much blood, in cleaving to the house of *Saul*, and opposing his Kingdome (which was an opposing of the Kingdom of the *Messiah* in the Type; and a fighting against the cause of God) and after-ward, when they joined in the unnatural rebellion with *Abisolom*, yet, upon relinquishing their former course they were re-admitted into fellowship of Council and arms, with the rest, who had adhered to the cause of God. Many such instances might be produced from the History of the Judges, and by succeeding Kings of *Judab*, which might abundantly clear this truth, which we pass as studying brevity.

The New Testament doth speak more clearly to this point, but we shall content our selves to touch a few things only, 1. It is evident these Souldiers who came to *John Baptist*, were professors, either Profelytes, or (as some think) native Jews under the Roman pay; And as Orthodox Divines do from *Johns* preaching to them, and not enjoining them to quit their military employment, strongly argue against Anabaptists for the lawfulness of war to Christi-ans; So it will as strongly conclude the lawfulness of Chri-stians conjunctions in arms with men of another Religion; yea, even Heathens, such as many of the Romish Souldiers were. The like also may be concluded from the instance of

§. 23.

Cornelius and *Peters* preaching to him. 2. It is an undoubted truth, that now under the Gospel, it is lawfull for godly, sound and Orthodox Christians to be of, and abide in one civil incorporation with wicked Idolaters, Heathens and Pagans; We say not that it is lawful for honest Christians to associate and embody themselves voluntarily, and of new, with such people, being before free and distinct from them; But that it is lawful to abide in such an Incorporation, we believe no Orthodox Christian (though Anabaptists and fifth Monarchy men may) will deny: as being agreeable to the tenor of the Epistles of the Apostles concerning marriage-fellowship to be kept betwixt a Christian and an Infidel, if they be not forced from it by violence, though it were not lawful for a Christian being free, to enter into that fellowship; and Christians continuance in servitude to Heathens, unlesse they be made free. Now if it be lawfull to abide in one civil Incorporation with such, It is also not only lawful for them, but their duty which they may not neglect when need requireth, to join and concur with their co-members in such actings as are for their kind lawful, which essentially belong to the relation, and are necessary for the preservation of the Incorporation, and the just common interests thereof, such as conjunction in arms to repel invasion is.

3. As Christ never came to a people with his Gospel, to make that unlawful which was lawful before to them by the Law of nature (as this conjunction in arms in the case already mentioned must be acknowledged to be before a people embrace the Gospel) So we doubt not but understanding Christians will find that the Scriptures speaking to Christians living under Heathenish powers, and commanding them to perform to them all things lawful and competent to the relations wherein they stood to them, doth positively warrant them to join with their fellow-citizens in this case. And particularly, that passage, *Rom. 13. 5, 6, 7, 8.* doth clearly evince this, where the Apostle commandeth Christians to be subject to heathenish Magistrates, not only for wrath, but conscience sake, and to pay tribute

to them (whereby they maintained their wars) and that is a voluntary and active way, upon the account that they are the Ministers of God, attending upon that very thing, even to protect Subjects and Common-wealths.

Fourthly, The other branch of our Brethrens assertion, concerning godly mens not joining with an Army so constitute, is so grosse, that all who condemn withdrawing from exercises of Divine worship, agreeable in the matter of Divine institution, as a sinful separation, will abhor it: seeing by their denial of the lawfulness of concurrence in a lawful necessary duty, because of the personal sin to fellow-actors in it, they homologate with the tenent and practice of separatism; yea, we believe that they who are most strict in the matter of Ecclesiastick communion, will deny that such strictness is requisite in military conjunction; especially in the case of invasion. And we are the more confirmed in this judgement, that some of the great sticklers in our debates have separate from the communion of this Church, and that (as they professed) upon the very principles whereby they were led with the rest of our dissenting Brethren. Yea, one of our Brethren, now at his rest in the Lord, being desired by them to handle the controversie against the Separatists, after he had studied it accurately for a time, did professe ingenuously before his removal, (as is known to some of us, and others who were ear-witnesses) that he found it impossible to maintain the truth against Separatists, retaining their principles upon which they had gone against the Commission of the Church.

We are not ignorant, that not only against this assertion as we have propounded it, but even against the Resolution, which was more strict, a great noise is made of objections, from places of Scripture gathered together in heaps. And as to us, this Resolution is charged upon us, as a defection from our former principles, and a violation of our Covenant and engagements. As to this last challenge, we shall adde nothing to what is said in the observations upon our differences, pag. 34, 35, 36. Neither shall

§. 24.

§. 25.

shall we enter upon a particular examination of these Scriptures. Only this in the general, most part of them are out of the Old Testament spoken to the people of the Jews then by divine institution, as in their Religion, so in their State, separated from all other people of the World; and relate to entering into voluntary and elective confederacies and associations with other Kingdomes or Nations: Yea, and some of them for active assistance unto the Nations with whom the confederacy was made; and so do not at all touch our case of joint acting in Armes for just and necessary defence of Subjects of one Nation, habitually and antecedently incorporate and now in common hazard. And for these alleged from the New Testament, They are such as are alleged by Separatists for separation from Churches for the sin of fellow-members, (as that 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. Sec.) which yet we believe judicious Separatists themselves will judge to be impertinently applyed to a separation in the case now in hand. As for that passage, Deut. 23. 9. which was continually in their mouths in this debate, it would be considered that it was spoken in the first instance to people so separate from all Nations, as hath been said: And in so far as it may contain a Moral rule for all ages, it doth not hold out any rule for regulating the constitution of an Army, but onely the conversation and carriage of a people in an Army going forth against an enemy, that they should then especially keep themselves from sin and provoking God when they are carrying their life in their hand, as the Scripture speaketh. This appeareth from ver. 10. 11. where purity is required not only from grosse open; and formally voluntary sin, but also from secret sins and the involuntary issues of natural corruption; which we believe fall not under the tryal of men, nor can be followed or looked unto in constituting of Armies.

§. 26.

We shall add no more concerning this Resolution, but this one word; However our Brethren charge this upon us as a defection from our former Principles; yet we professe, we never knew any such Principle owned in our Church, so encroaching upon the power of civil Magistrates, and so dangerous

gerous to all Christian Nations ; And we do for our selves disown and disclaim it before the World ; humbly obtesting all Civil Powers and Churches abroad, that they entertain no such thoughts that ever such a Principle or Doctrine was or is owned by this Church, what ever hath been the judgement or practice of some particular men, as to this matter.

As for the other publick resolution of *May 24. 1651.* concerning the rescinding of the Act of Classes, there is so little said against the matter of it, that we need not insist on it. It is true, not only those who were against the former resolution, but others also in the State who were most active in the former, did with great eagerness impede the asking or giving a resolution in this case. But they have their own hearts to examine, whether it was (not dissatisfaction as to the finfulness of the matter, but) self interest that drove them so to do. It is true also much is spoken to the complex business and prosecution of this Resolution ; but the Church cannot therefore be charged with defection upon the account of the Resolution it self, which was only their deed ; for it contains nothing else, but a clearing of the Commission that they claim no right to have hand in, or meddling with the making or rescinding of Acts of Parliament : An acknowledgement of the power of the civil Magistrate to shorten or lengthen civil punishments, constituted and inflicted by himself, as he finds just and necessary for the good of the Commonwealth ; And a resolution in point of conscience (being thereunto required) that the State might without sin take off the censures inflicted by themselves in the Act of *Classes* ; with positive and expresse provision, that they should observe the most strict conditions & qualification in the persons, that had been at any time formerly required, All which are so justifiable that we believe no ingenuous and judicious Christian will carp at them. And therefore our Brethren do but unjustly challenge us on this account. They say, a design was carried on to advance Malignants, and to crush these who had formerly been opposite to them ; and yet no such design can be fastened on the Commissions resolution ; yea, before this resolution

resolution was given, they interposed for obtaining security for all that were to be admitted, in that very particular, and did not fail to bear witness against some who were admitted by the State, against whom there was just cause of exception. They cry out that many of these who were admitted upon this and the former resolution, were but superficial in professing repentance for their former miscarriages, and it was suddenly taken off their hands. But we need not vindicate how unjustly this imputation is cast upon many of them who were most opposed by them; whose carriage hath proved them more stedfast in the cause of God, and lesse seekers of their own interests than those that opposed them. We do only assert, that this cannot be laid to the charge of the Commission, who as they walked justifiably in holding out the rule, so they did receive very few themselves, but remitted them to the judicatories, charging them to be accurate in the matter, and to proceed according to the order appointed by the general Assemblies. Yea, it was some of our Brethren themselves, who did receive some of the most eminent of those, upon profession of their repentance.

§. 28. We proceed now to speak somewhat to the third matter of our publike difference; Which relates to the two last Assemblies of this Church, the one at *St. Andrews* and *Dundie* in the year 1651, and the other at *Edinburgh* the year thereafter. Against the first of which, our Brethren (apprehending that it was likely the Commissions resolutions might be approved there) were pleased to protest, and declined it as unlawful and evil, as to all authority; as they did also against that which ensued; and ever since will have them to be accounted no general Assemblies of this Church. The evil of this course being so notour, and sensible in the sad consequences thereof, both at home among our selves, and abroad also among all who hear of our differences, and do love that truth and peace which once was amongst us, we shall say but a few things to it, And

§. 29. First, it may be evident to all who are unbyassed, that our Brethren by protesting once and again against the supreme

preme Church-judicatory (and being ready and waiting on to have done it the third time, had the Assembly 1693. been permitted to sit and constitute themselves) have begun and continued a sad rent in this Church, destructive to the very being thereof, if mercy prevent it not. Albeit before this Rent, one of the leading men of that party had declared in a particular case, that protesting against the act of a general Assembly, or of any delegates having their power, deserved summary excommunication by the constitutions of this Church; yet they have not spared when it was for their interests, and the times seemed to afford them immunity, to protest against the very being of two Assemblies. Whereas had they contented themselves to have protested against the approving of the Resolutions, or any other acts of these Assemblies, (which might have been a sufficient salve and exoneration to them) we are confident it had been born with, as many such irregular practices and protestations of theirs are laid aside without censure by inferior judicatories. But by their overturning the very being and authority of these Assemblies; They have taught ill-affected men too many criticisms upon all the Assemblies which have been in this Church; They have learned others by their example, to condemn the Authority of Church-judicatories, as we find by daily experience; They have laid down a course how themselves (and others, if they please to follow their example) may do what they list, and then decline the Judge who should cognosce upon their carriage; They slight and oppose the resolutions of inferior Church-judicatories, protesting and appealing to a lawful general Assembly, and yet by their principles they are sure the Church of Scotland shall have none lawful (had they never so many) till they be pleased to approve thereof. And, they have cast themselves upon a snare very sinful and scandalous in a National Church, that by their declinatures, they are engaged not only against what they think sinful in the acts of these Assemblies, but that they cannot join in most lawful things (were it humiliations upon in-controversed causes) which

flow from that authority. These are some few of the sad consequences necessarily attending these protestations, which may abundantly evidence, the evil and sin of such a course.

Secondly, The evil of this course may appear further, if we compare their fact, with the Reasons upon which they ground it, no wayes like these Reasons upon which the general Assembly at *Glasgow* condemned some former corrupt general Assemblies; but for the most part so false and irrelevant, that it is to us strange, they should own them before the world, and publish them in print. They give out there was no access to many to come to that first Assembly by reason of the motions of Armies at that time, and yet (beside that this is very extrinsecal to the freedom and lawfulness of the Assembly) Commissioners came from places most infested. They say the Assembly was infrequent, and yet the Roles of that Assembly will evidence it was as frequent as many of the Assemblies which they do not question. They allege that the Assembly was not free, but over-awed, and yet some of themselves (who went along with that Assembly till the end thereof, though afterward they joined in the protestation) may bear witness, if they will speak truth, that never did Assembly more freely and fully debate and reason upon matters; then this Assembly did upon these Resolutions. They urge in their protestation against the second Assembly, that many Presbyteries refused to send Commissioners to it, and yet they were but some, and that where they had power, for which the Assembly could not be blamed, and some others who thought fit not to send Commissioners, yet by their Letter to the Assembly did expressly declare they were not against the Authority of the former Assembly, and consequently not against that. To this may be added that our Brethren themselves did really evidence their own sense of the weakness of their grounds, in that, though all their Reasons were clear before the Assembly at *St. Andrews* and *Dundie* was constitute, yet they forbore at first to give in their declination, but with some *salvo's* did sit and join in the Assembly chusing a Moderator, and acting both in the Assembly and

and Committees, for several dayes, never appearing with their protestation, till the day wherein a considerable part of the forces were defeat, & the assembly were met late at night to adjourn to *Dundie*, and then very unseasonably they gave in it. Yea, it further appears from this, that the most part of these who now join in that protestation refused then to go along in it, nor did they after join with them, till the face of affairs were more fully altered.

But that we do them no wrong, and may obviate what may seem plausible in their way, to these who are unacquainted with our affairs, we shall speak a little to two particulars, whereof they make especial use to justify their protestations. The first is, that many members were admitted in these Assemblies, who were guilty of a course of defection, in the matter of the Resolutions formerly mentioned, who therefore were incapable to be members. This is the strong argument whereby they study to engage the simple and well-affected to their party, and upon which they spare not in their emissions, to profess the weight of their cause lieth, and do condemn those Assemblies because they approved of these Resolutions. And therefore we answer, 1. Albeit the consideration of the persons whom they accuse as chief leaders in this defection, might make them (were they ingenuous) blush to declare them incapable of such a trust, who for many years, both under Prelates and since, have been eminently honoured of God to be owners of truth and purity, and promoters of piety, when others were not; Yet we trust, what hath been hinted in defence of these Resolutions, and against their Remonstrance, will break this snare, and clear where the defection lyeth. And so these Resolutions being found to have been their duty, the whole Superstructure must fall. 2. These Resolutions (what ever they were) were not as yet, nor could be judicially found to be a defection, till the Assembly were constituted and cognosed thereupon, and therefore they could not inflict such a censure on so many formerly Ministers and Elders, till their cause was tried, and themselves heard. Only when their proceedings came to be tried, they were

4.31:

(98)

to be removed (as our Brethren know is the constant custom) and judged by the Assembly, and if they were found culpable, the Assembly was free to inflict what censure they deserved. And our Brethren know that in the Assembly, 1652, such an exception was not accounted relevant in this Church, to hinder members of a preceding Commission, from sitting as members in the succeeding Assembly, and to voice (except in the matter of their own proceedings to be tried and judged) until an account were taken of their proceedings: And if they should have been removed before, we see not but our Brethren who continued in opposition to them, should also have been removed with them, that the Assembly might have judged of both, though the Assembly did freely allow such as were opposite to the Resolutions, to sit and reason, and voice according to their judgement in these matters, when the Commission was removed. 3. What ever may be said of these Resolutions, and the Assemblies approbation thereof, yet it was but one act; and we believe one act (suppose sinful) doth not make void and null, the Authority of a judicatorie to all effects; otherwise all judicatories might easily be overturned. 4. We desire it may be considered, how deep our Brethrens principle will draw. For if these mens being in a course of defection (as is supposed) do render the judicatorie unlawful where they are admitted, and oblige men not to join with them in that judicatorie; Then by parity of reason they must also overturn all inferiour Church-judicatories, whereof they are members; nor must they join in these with them. Nay we see not how their principles will allow them to join with them in any lawful act of Religion and worship, more than in an assembly.

§.32.

The next thing they allege is, That Presbyteries were prelimited in their due election of Commissioners to the Assembly 1651. by a Letter of the Commission sent to them, appointing such Brethren as after conference remain unsatisfied with, and continue to oppose the publike resolutions, to be cited to the general Assembly: Ans. 1. This sayeth nothing against the Assembly 1652. where no such prelimiti-

limitations were, & yet they protested against it. They allege prelimitations in it also by the acts of the former Assembly. But their consciences cannot but tell them, that any such acts (to say nothing to the matter of them, relating to the publike resolutions) were so far from being put in execution, that they were wholly laid aside, and the Commission of the Assembly at St. Andrews and Dundie, did at a meeting and conference with them, earnestly press and intreat they would join with them in the ensuing assembly; which they refused to do, upon the account of the Resolutions (even though the subject matter thereof, and so all occasion of debate about them, was then extinct) and because that Assembly had a dependence upon the former, they had protested against, and had appointed time and place thereof, albeit legally they could no other way have access to keep a new assembly, but by virtue of the former indiction and appointment. 2. We think it strange our brethren should be against all prelimitations in the matter of constituting assemblies, and that taking such course as the Commission then took, about emergent scandals, or errors, should render an assembly null and unlawful. We may say it, in our conferences with our brethren we have found them averse from joining in an assembly with us, without both prelimitations and pre-ingenagements. And it is not unknown in this Church, that such courses as that of the Commission have bene followed, without any reflexion upon the freedom of assemblies. And to passe other instances which may be, and are elsewhere produced, we shall pitch on that parallel of the Commission 1648. Wherein some of our brethren had the chief hand, *In which, by expresse acts, The Commission earnestly recommends to Presbyteries, to take special notice and trial of every Brothers carriage in the publike business; That if any be found that do not declare themselves against the present malignant course, nor come with their brethren in the common resolutions against it, nor give publike information to the people, that they be referred to the next general assembly; And if any of them have already declared for it, that they be presently censured.* Here we will not only find a parallel to that done by the Commission 1651. but somewhat that went beyond

yond them: Here, such as were silent or joined not with their brethren, nor informed the people, were referred to the general assembly. The commission 51. did not meddle at all with such, nay, nor with their continued dissatisfaction after conference, if they did not actively oppose, and by their preaching and other actions, obstruct the execution of the Resolutions for defence of the Nation. Here, such as declared themselves, were to be presently censured by Presbyteries; but the Commission 51. did only appoint opposers after reference to be cited to the general Assembly, that they might be accountable for their carriage, as the Commission was for their proceedings, and that they might prosecute (if they had any thing to say) these libels they had emitted, against the judicatories and their proceedings. From which it is clear, that the Commission used more tenderneſſe in that case, then was usual and approved formerly in this Church. If our brethren (as they do) recurre to this, that the proceedings of the Commission 1648. were right upon the matter as these in the 51. were not, and so the cases are different: We hope what hath been said of these resolutions, will refute that imputation and clear there is a parity still. And however, we believe that matters of formality in constituting judicatories must be still the same in all matters, and what ever may be concluded from the matter, as to one act of the judicatorie, yet it cannot be simply null, if it proceed in form but according to former approved practices. 3. It would be impartially considered what effect that Letter had as to prelimit the assembly in the election of its members, wherein we hope the nullity of the allegiance will sufficiently appear. For 1. It is known that Letter was sent but to a very few Presbyteries, & these (most of them) after their elections were past. 2. It needed not to be sent to many for that end they mention (viz. to prelimit them in their elections) for many Presbyteries had none at all of their judgement among them, and others very few, and however they have emitted to the world an account of some in most of Presbyteries of their judgement, yet when they reckon again, they will find they have wronged

ed some, whom they name as theirs, and yet to this day they continue opposite to their course, and that they could not make such an account them of many, as they may do now; since divers taking advantage of the times, and seeking their own interests, have fallen to them. 3. Whatever they say of the Commissions deed, or their active prelimitations thereby; yet if they shall assert there was any passive prelimitation, either of Presbyteries in electing, or the Assemblies admitting of such to be members (in which case only it can plead the nullity of the Assembly) we may boldly declare that they speak against clear truth; for notwithstanding that letter, the most part of the most active opposers were chosen by Presbyteries, and admitted and acted in that assembly, till it pleased themselves to protest and leave it. Yea, further, to assert this passive prelimitation of Presbyteries, will strike not only against the Commission, but against all the Presbyteries of the Land, as unfaithfull and betrayers of their trust, which were too heavy a charge against a National Church. The truth is, the carriage both of the Commission, Presbyteries, and Generall Assemblies doth make it clear, there was no prelimitation intended, nor practised in electing members to, nor admitting them to sit in the Generall Assembly; for they not onely might, but were actually chosen and admitted in it. Only (as is said) the Commission thought it fit they should be cited thither, and that however they might act and vote in other things, yet the Commission and they should be tried together in that debate, which we believe any unbiassed Christian will judge to have been their duty, and very far from prelimiting of the Assembly, and an irrelevant ground, on which they should have made a rent, and such an inlet of confusion upon this Church, as hath followed thereupon.

Having so briefly as might consist with perspicuity, laid open the true State of the controversie betwixt our Brethren and us, and the progresse of our publique differences, till it came to a stated rupture by their Protestations; we shall now (in pursuance of the second head propounded) give a brief account of some consequences and practices that have followed.

followed upon this rupture. It may be, and is the matter of our sad lamentation before the Lord, and we might pour out abundance of complaints in the bosomes of sympathizing Christians, who ever were sensible of the mercy of a Church enjoying the sweet of harmony, that by these divisions sad prejudices have redounded to the Kingdom of Christ among us, that the work of the Gospel is exceedingly retarded thereby, Atheism and irreligion increased, true Religion and godliness exposed to hatred and reproach, because of the carriage and way of many who professed it, the authority of Church-judicatories enervate and rendred contemptible; their meetings, which some times were a reviving now turned into occasions of grief to the lovers and friends of Church-Government and order; yea, and the work of purging (which our Brethren do so much call for) exceedingly retarded and obstructed. But leaving these before the Lord, who alone can apply an effectual remedy thereunto; we hold it our duty to give an account of some of our Brethrens irregular practices following upon their renting from the Judicatories; whereby (as by the effects) it may appear what their spirit and way in these differences is, and it may be discerned what accession they have to these sad distempers formerly mentioned.

§.34.

Their first course taken for carrying on their design, and strengthening their faction, and which they set on foot shortly after their first protestation, was; the convening of great numbers of Ministers, Elders, Professours and Expectants from all parts of the Land in extrajudicial meetings. Wherein after confession of sins and prayer, performed indifferently by Ministers, Elders, or others in these great meetings, they did and do proceed to determination of particulars, tending to the strengthening of their cause, and engaging of others in it, and do give equall power to all present in voicing and determining in these matters of most publique concernment. The Lord knoweth that we do from our hearts approve of the duties of private mutual edification, as they are enjoined in the word, and are recommended and bounded by the acts of our general Assemblies, with the consent, and to the good liking

liking then of all our Brethren; and we do account it not
 suitable to the nature of these duties to make a noise of pro-
 fessing our own practise thereof accordingly. But we do
 not see that our Brethrens way in these is at all agreeable to
 the Rule, nor consistent with the peace of any constitute Na-
 tional Church. And particularly we cannot but resent in
 their way, 1. That they should make use of these religious ex-
 ercises, as a subservient mean for carrying on these courses,
 which we hope by what is said will appear to be most un-
 lawful in themselves. 2. That by giving out themselves in
 these meetings as the generality of the godly throughout
 the Land, or delegates in a sort from them; they do cast an
 imputation upon the bulk of the National Church beside,
 who are against their way, and do not joyn with them in
 these courses, as not only wrong in that matter, but as not god-
 ly, some very few excepted. Which as we know to be a most
 false imputation; (not many of these, of any rank, who
 owned the cause from the beginning, going along with
 them:) So it is an evidence of a strange divisive and separa-
 ting spirit in our Brethren. 3. That they should take upon
 them in these meetings to determine upon matters of greatest
 importance already determined both in State and Church,
 (as the first time these conclusions agreed upon by both,
 mentioned in the matter of the Remonstrance, were expressly
 condemned, was in their first meeting of this sort) for not
 only doth it reflect upon the established judicatories, as not
 worthy to be trusted in these things: but neither have they
 any power of themselves to determine in these things, nor
 have the generality of the godly whom they pretend to
 represent, power to authorize them for that effect, unless
 they will joyn issue with fifth Monarchy-men, in their opi-
 nions concerning the power of Saints. 4. That by these
 determinations in those meetings, so contrary to truth, and the
 received principles of this Church, and the results and pra-
 ctices that flow from them, and all under the name of the
 generality of the godly; they expose piety to hatred and
 contempt amongst us; while as men see pretenders thereunto
 so absurd and irregular in their opinions and practices. By

this means (we may say it with regrate) impiety and irrelligion have spread more within these few years, than of a long time formerly.

§.35.

Their next course for carrying on their work, was the erecting of the pretended Commission from the generall Assembly, 1650. as still in force, because of the pretended nullity of the Assemblies ~~that~~ have succeeded thereunto. The setting up of this Commission was one of the results of their first extrajudicial meeting, in *October*, or *November*, 1651. At which time, what they had agreed upon in their meeting, concerning the causes of wrath, and the overturning of the settled resolutions of State and Church, was published as the deed of that Commission, hereby supposing to add authority thereunto; but in effect branding this Church as infamous; while as they who pretend to have supreme power therein for present, and give out themselves to be the only men who have adhered to the principles of the Church of *Scotland*, do make null and void all the publike Transactions concluded in the view of the world, do maintain such inconsistent principles, and do retract and condemn these things, which were held out as the constant tenour of the Churches conclusions and declarations.

§.36.

As this was the first Act of that pretended Commission; so they have since from time to time, adjourned and voted the continuance of that power as still in force to this day. And albeit (for any thing we know) they have no authentick Copie of their Commission, whereby they might know their power, what is intrusted to them, and the number which makes a *Quorum*; yea, albeit not only that Commission was legally expired at the day of the meeting of the next Assembly, which convened in the year 1651. But albeit the generality of the Members thereof did give up their Commission and proceedings to be tried in that Assembly, and were accordingly approved, and a new Commission given (as was also done at the Assembly thereafter, 1652.) yet our Brethren being but a small number of the members of that Commission, upon a pretence of the nullity of these Assemblies, did judge upon the validity of their own protestations

testations against them, and set themselves down as a Commission, which (for any thing we know) may be a perpetual court; seeing they alledge the continuance of their power till the next free and lawful general Assembly, and none such can be had so long as they please to protest against it, even albeit the Presbyteries and generality of the National Church should own it, as they did at both these contraverted Assemblies. We know not what can be, if this be not an usurpation upon the liberties of the Church; when some of these who are intrusted with a deligate power till the next Assembly, do make themselves perpetual Prelates, and usurp a negative voice over the Presbyteries, and their Commissioners met in a general Assembly; yea, and over the major part of these intrusted with them; and so do cast all who ought to call them to an account, that they may still continue in power.

A third course taken by our Brethren to make and keep a party and faction, is their way of celebrating Communion, and observing of publique Fasts: Albeit the general Assembly in the year 1645. did establish an Order for uniformity and preventing of confusion in the celebration of that Sacrament, wherewith this whole Church then rested well satisfied; Yet since our divisions, our dissenting Brethren have taken up a new and irregular way. To omit their way of admitting persons who come from other Congregations, they do not now usually celebrate that Ordinance, but they have a great many (six or seaven, and sometime double, or more) of Ministers gathered to it, whose Congregations (most part) are left destitute of Preaching that day; great confluences from all the Country, and many Congregations about are gathered at them, and on every day of their meeting (which are *Saturday*, the Lords day, and *Munday*) many of these Ministers do Preach successively one after another, so that three or four, and sometime more, do preach at their preparation, and as many on the *Munday* following; and on the Lords day, sometime three or four do Preach before they go to the action; besides, these who Preach to the multitudes of People that cannot be contained in the Church.

9.37:

These practices, as they are a clear violation of the Order unanimously established in this Church, and do occasion great animosities and alienations in simple People, against those Ministers who will not imitate these irregular courses; so uninterested observers, do perceive a clear design in all this, to set up themselves, as the only pious and zealous people, worthy to be trusted and followed in our publique differences. Which if it be not an injury to that sacred Ordinance, and an improving thereof (which is a bond of unity and communion) to be a wedge to drive on and fixe a rent, let the judicious and sober judge.

§. 38.

The like may be said of their publique Fasts appointed by themselves, and for causes which they emit without the concurrence of the judicatories. We shall not insist to clear how untrue many of their causes are upon the matter, (as determining in our publique differences contrary to the judgement of this Church) nor to assert their want of authority to appoint Fasts and determine the causes thereof, except upon causes proper to the Congregation where the Fast is observed; especially upon such causes as are otherwise determined by the Church judicatories. But two things we cannot passe in this matter. 1. That a studied schisme and Rent is carried on by these Fasts; as will appear partly, if we consider the timing of them so, as may make the division betwixt them and their Brethren conspicuous in these things. Since our divisions, the judicatories of the Church have been tender of a visible rupture in the matter of publique Fasting; and therefore when our Brethren would not concur with them in that duty, they forbore to observe week days for that effect (as was their custome formerly, and they would gladly yet be at it, as they do continue it where the division is not) that so all the people might be about religious worship, on days appointed for Fasting, though our Brethren would not joyn in it; but our Brethren not regarding this, do observe them on week days, wherein the scandalous rupture appears, in that they are about that exercise, while their neighbouring Congregations, (yea and sometime many in that same Congregation,

cion, dissatisfied with their way, are at work. And partly if we consider their way in these Fasts, even such as they observe in their Communion; for they convene many Ministers, and multitudes of people from all corners about to that work. 2. We are not a little confirmed in our apprehension of a design in this, that our brethren do refuse to joyn in humiliations and fasts with us, and that upon most uncontraverted causes, such as our calamities, divisions, and contempt of the Gospel, &c. Sometime they refused to joyn in them, because they flowed from the authority of the Assemblies which they cannot own; which we do look upon as a visible and woful fruit of the needles Rent they have made, by overturning these judicatories, as null in their authority to all effects; and sometime when the fast is appointed by the questioned authority of Synods and Presbyteries, they have refused to joyn, because they alleadged the causes were defective, that is (according to our brethren) because the Resolutions of the Church, and the owning the authority of these Assemblies, were not brought in also as causes of fasting. We hope the judicious and godly will perceive this not only to be unjust upon the matter, and an injurious reflecting upon their brethren, who require no such thing of them in reference to their real declinings; but also to be a very divisive principle, that men will not joyn in causes of fasting, because that every cause (suppose true) is not held out in them; and that they will not concur in lawful duties, on lawful causes, because these with whom they joyn will not come up to their judgement in all other things.

In the fourth place we shall give some account of our brethrens other irregular practices in the matter of Church-Government and discipline, whereby they have exceedingly disturbed the peace of this Church, and promoted their own designs. We need not relate what alterations are in meetings of Church-judicatories, occasioned by their contradicting and opposing whatsoever is not subservient to their design, or concluded contrary to their minde; and what bitter and unjust reflexions and reproaches, the judicatories meet with from them in their conduct in word and writing, which they

they pack up. We shall only point at some particulars of their a^ctings, And

§. 40.

1. Since this division in our Church, some Brethren within the bounds of a Presbyterie have erected themselves as the only Presbyterie of that bounds, and for no intreaty of the Synod to which that Presbyterie is subordinate, will they be perswaded to unite with the rest of their brethren within that bounds, for carrying on the common affairs of the Presbyterie; but go on to this day to plant Congregations as they please. And by their continual protestations against the Synod, and counter-a^ctings to their determinations, do frustrate all the Synods endeavours for staying any abuse.

2. It is a thing most ordinary with our brethren, to obtrude Ministers upon congregations, sometime contrary to the mind of the whole congregation, sometime of the greater part thereof, upon the call only of some very few and inconsiderable part of that congregation, whom they are pleased to call the godly in the congregation: yea, sometime Ministers of other Presbyteries do usurp power to put in a Minister, not only against the hearts of the congregation, but of the whole Presbyterie to which that Congregation is subordinate. And they do not only thrust in Ministers thus in a forcible and violent way, but they do it where the congregation is already orderly planted with an able and godly intrant.

§. 42.

3. These irregularities not sufficing to strengthen their faction, some of them went a further length, and procured an order concerning the maintenance of Intrants to the Ministry, to be allowed by Commissioners appointed for that effect. Wherein, *Scotland* being divided into five Provinces, no Intrant was to have any stipend allowed him, without a Certificate from (at least) four of Ministers and others named for the respective Provinces where the Minister was to be planted. And however some few were named as Certifiers who differed from them in judgement; yet they conveyed the matter so, as in no one Province there were a competent number of them to give Testimony

to any Intransigent, though they had been free to act in a course so destructive to the order and government of this Church; yea, in one of the Provinces (and that the largest) there were so many named, as were a competent number of these who had separate from the communion of this Church; from whom little favour could be expected to men cordially adhering to the Presbyterian Government, and the procurers of that order testified small affection thereunto, by endeavouring to put that trust in the hands of such.

4. Our brethren do strike at the very being of Presbyterian government, and make every person or inferior judicatorie his or their own Supreme Judge, while as they deny the subjection and subordination of persons to judicatories, and of inferior judicatories to superiour, in the matters of government and discipline. But when a man is questioned for an uncontroverted fault, if he please to appeal to a free general Assembly (which we know not if ever we may have in their judgement, had we never so many) he looks upon that not only as a legal defence giving him liberty to bring his business to an hearing again, before the Judge-competent, but as a sufficient warrant to go on in his course. Likewise if any conclusion of an inferior judicatorie, be brought by appeal before a superior Court, and if their proceedings be judged irregular and unjust, they do presently appeal, and upon that, go on to counter-act against any such determinations. This practice, in matters of discipline and government was never heard of in this Church, nor we believe in any Church where the Officers and constitution thereof were acknowledged to be agreeable to the Word of God. But whatever the Superior judicatory might do as they would be answerable, notwithstanding an appeal; yet the appellor and inferior did alwayes submit and sist their proceedings, till their cause was heard and tried. Otherwise, it were in vain to think of a remedy by a superiour judicatory, especially, when our Brethren have learned a way to cast all Supreme Assemblies, till they be sure they be of their mind.

5. What

§.44.

§. What ever our Brethren speak of purging, yet they shew themselves very Irregular and partial in that work. Albeit we have been most tender of them, and since the Assembly at St. *Andrews* and *Dundie* have never censured any upon the account of the publike differences; yet when information is given in against any of them as scandalous and insufficient, they decline all trial of the matter, and sometime for that end, decline the judicatories as corrupt. But their proceeding against any of our judgement, where they have power, is most disorderly: For they cast out men at their pleasure (and none but such as otherwise differ from them in publike matters) having nothing real or relevant against them; some of them being men, who when they joined with them for a time, were good enough in their account. And when those who are censured have recourse to superiour judicatories for redress; our brethren by their protestations & appeals do keep their cause from being heard, and by their counter-actings (yea, sometime by tumultuary wayes of some of their followers, abusing these whom they unjustly censured, and affronting Ministers who execute the Synods acts in their favours) do leave poor men under oppression, without any possibility of a remedy in an orderly way.

§.45.

Fifthly, (to add no more) Our Brethren have studied to carry on their design by reproaches and calumnies spread of those who are opposite unto them: They have published to the world in print, that this National Church is guilty of a defection from the Covenant and cause of God, many eminent servants of Jesus Christ are branded as authors and ring-leaders in that defection; godly men are said to be blasted, deserted, and back-sliden; The generality of the Ministry are cried out upon as corrupt; we are traduced as opposite to the purging out of scandalous and insufficient Ministers, yea, the judicatories are accounted unworthy of that trust, in that they must have extra judicial Committees: appointed for that effect. To all which (omitting what hath been already spoken, to the matter of our controversies, and what may be after hinted at) we only say. 1. As some of these aspersions are (we hope) wiped off, by our clearing
of

of the falshood of the grounds upon which they are laid to our charge; so the rest of them not being the cause of their first rent, cannot warrant them to continue in it. And of all of them we may say, that we hope no judicious Christian will like their cause the better, that they are so oft put to make use of personal reflexions and calumnies to defend it. 2. What ever be the clamours they raise of the general corruption of the Ministry, yet they have been oft put to it, and solemnly obtested to condescend upon particular persons and their scandal; that they might be tried; yet for most part they have alwaies declined it, which is a cleer evidence of a design in it, to keep themselves in the general. 3. We have oftentimes told our Brethren, that their continuing in their way, doth obstruct the work of purging, and rendereth the Authority of Church judicatories contemptible; and we have assured them that if they will unite with us, we doubt not (through the blessing of God) to purge the Church sufficiently in as exact a way as can be desired according to justice. 4. Albeit our brethren neither do purge, nor will suffer us to try any of their judgement, yet we are not wanting in that work to our power, but have exactly tried persons upon informations given in against them by our brethren, though oftentimes the reality or relevancy of their informations are not made to appear when put to trial; others also we have in several places under process, and divers have been purged out in several parts of the Land.

Having laid open some of the sinistrous courses followed by our brethren for carrying on their design, and of the consequences of this Rupture, We hold our selves obliged (in prosecution of the third head propounded) to give an account what have been our endeavours to prevent or heal this wofull Rupture: We need not here expresse what hath been the affliction of our spirits before the Lord because of our condition, and our desires to him for curing thereof, nor what pains we have taken to lay before our brethren the evil of a schism, and how irrelevant their grounds were (suppose true) to bottome such courses upon. Nor shall we arrogate to our selves (in opposition to our brethren) that we could not, as Christians, look upon the wounds of our Mother, but with bleeding hearts; and would account our selves most unworthy

§.46.

of our trusts, if any private interest of our own should hinder an union ; or if we should not stretch our selves to the utmost, (keeping truth and a good conscience) to have our breaches made up. But this we may say as rational men, we were the greatest of fools, if we did not thirst and long after union upon right terms, considering that all we meet within our opposition to their courses, is reproaches, and many sad disadvantages our Brethren carrying on most of all their designs and courses; and our endeavours to prevent or remedy them, being all ineffectual and to no purpose, but the exoneration of our own consciences.

§. 47. That the sincerity of our desires, and our reall endeavours for obtaining union may appear, we shall only point at three particulars.

First, Albeit we continued in our dissatisfaction with their principles and ways, and wanted not competent Church-power generally throughout the Land, to have reached them with censures, and did meet with greatest provocations from them daily; yet (as we have said) since the Assembly 1651. we have never censured one to this day upon the account of the publique differences. Nay, we hope it will appear to these who have observed us and them, that we have forbore to render them evil for evil, or railing for railing.

§. 48. Secondly, As we have forbore to give any irritation which might alienate our Brethren, and make them more averse from peace; so our inclinations to accommodation with them were not at all extorted from us by reason of any disadvantages and prejudices we sustained through our brethrens irregularities and their successes in them. But all along from the beginning, out of our respect to the peace of our Mother-Church, and affection to our brethren, we were most tender and careful in studying to prevent a rupture, and in studying to bind up our breach when they had needlessly made it. We have already declared what the Commissions tenderness was in the matter of the Remonstrance, the first subject of our differences. Our brethren know what pains was taken in conferences, before the Assembly at Dundee to give them satisfaction in the matter of the Resolutions, and how it was desired, that if they could not be satisfied, yet they would be forbear

forbear to oppose, and actively to obstruct the execution thereof; but all to no purpose: It is also known how unreasonably and abruptly they gave in their first protestation and declination; and thereafter immediately did not only desert the Assembly, but left the place of their meeting, retiring to their own homes: So that the Assembly could have no opportunity to confer with them, that they might fall upon amicable ways, to take them off that divisive course. Shortly after that Assembly, when the condition of affairs was so altered, as they needed apprehend no prejudice, had the judicatories been never so violent, some of us did deal with some of them, that they would forbear to prosecute their protestations, by counter-actings, or following any irregular course, but would let the matter lie for a time, if so be spirits of men might now be calmed, and there might be a healing of that rupture. But instead of hearkning thereunto, they proceeded immediately to convene in their extrajudicial meetings, to erect their pretended Commission, and to publish such things to the world, and fall upon such irregular actings as did widen the breach, and afford us too just ground of fear, that nothing would satisfy them unless they had all their will; and were invested with chief power to manage all Church matters and govern the whole Church. Thereafter in May 1652. at a meeting of correspondents from Synods, it was desired that they would joyn in the Assembly shortly after ensuing, seeing the Assembly only could apply a fit and effectual remedy for curing of that breach. But they did not only refuse to hearken to this desire, but scattered their papers throughout the Land (some whereof are since published in Print) perswading not only those who had protested against the former Assembly, but all who were not satisfied with the publique Resolutions, not to joyn in electing or being elected Commissioners to this Assembly: a desire (beside the iniquity thereof upon the matter) most divisive & destructive to Church unity, and contrary to the Apostles rule, of keeping unity in a bond of peace, where there may be differences in judgement about some particulars; as we are perswaded learned and rational men will perceive and judge: And albeit they did refuse to joyn with us, yet that Assembly being constituted (and notwithstanding they did protest against the same,

behaving

behaving themselves so in that matter, as we have no pleasure to repeat) did not cast off thoughts of peace, but made an Overture to them for peace, wherein all they required was (not retracting of their judgements, nor an acknowledgement of the offence they had given by their practices, which yet had formerly been required of men who had not done so great disservice to the Church, but) only that they would for peace sake, passe from their protestations and declinatures which had made such a breach upon Church-Government, and led so bad a preparative for any who should please to trace their steps, (as a combined party of some Ministers formerly desposed did in part at that same Assembly) and that they would forbear to keep up debates upon the matters of our publique differences as those for the Assembly were also content to do. But our brethren did not so much as once hearken to this Overture, but utterly rejected it as hoping to speed better another way in their designs, as indeed they did, some particulars whereof are touched formerly.

§.47.

Thirdly, Though our Brethren after that time put us out of all hopes of peace, and by their irregular actions and endeavours to subvert the Government of this Church for some years, and by divers means and ways did give unto us matter of sad mourning before the Lord, and serious apprehensions of the result of their practices and ways: Yet as union was still in our heart and desires to God both in publique and private, so we continued in our moderate way of bearing their injurious reproaches, and forbearing to irritate them by any censures; though sometime the judicatories were necessitate for their own exoneration, nakedly to answer their reproaches, and declare their dissatisfaction and non-approbation of their irregularities. And when we were hopelesse of curing our publique differences, at least till we had a general Assembly; yet considering the many disorders following upon these differences, we did at meeting in June 1655. propound some Overtures to our brethren, for preventing the total subversion of Church-Government by these disorders, till an Assembly might meet, which were rejected by them. Thereafter when they did profess a desire of union (which how and upon what account it came on foot among them, themselves best know) and accordingly

dingly there was a meeting and conference for that effect; In November 1655. We gladly laid hold of the opportunity, and laying aside all prejudices, did stretch our selves to the utmost (keeping truth and a good conscience) to gain them if possible to an union in the judicatories of the Church. The Papers which passed at that conference are in the hands of divers, and will speak for themselves, and (we are confident) will plead for us in this matter in the judgement of discerning and un-biassed men. The particulars of our condescensions are too large to be here related. Only let this suffice in brief; In order to peace and union, it was offered, that (whatever was our own judgement of the censures inflicted upon any by the assembly at *St. Andrews* and *Dundee*, yet) we were content that all these censures should be taken off, and that in such a way as might neither reflect upon the Assembly, nor our Brethren, or us; That any Acts ordaining censures because of these matters should be sisted till an Assembly, wherein we should endeavour the abrogation of them; that in our after-joynt-actings, we should abstract from all reflexion upon by-past differences; that as to the matter of the Resolutions, and the two controverted Assemblies; however we could not in our consciences condemn, nor be consenting to the annulling thereof, yet we did not urge them to renounce their own judgement in either of these; nor that they should passe from their Protestations as a standing Testimony of their judgements (whatever we judged they ought to do) but were content that these Resolutions and Acts and declarations concerning the same should never be urged against them as the definitive judgement of this Church to any effect; that the authority of these Assemblies should not be urged against them; that (however we doubted not of the lawfull constitution thereof, yet) ensuing Assemblies should be constitute according to the constitution of general Assemblies preceeding our differences; and that we would not bind them up, if they pleased, from propounding reasons to any ensuing Assembly against the publique resolutions, though we judge they would never be able to bring any sufficient reason against them: Only we desired they would not urge us to renounce our judgements in condemning these Resolutions, and declaring null the authority of these Assemblies;

blies; and that they would declare that they should not at any time hereafter make use of these protestations in any judicatory to call in question and annull the constitution and authority of these Assemblies, so long as the authority thereof was not urged against them; which if they did not grant, we could not but foresee the ruine of the Government of the Church; We did also (beside other particulars) offer unto them, that not only should Synods take their determinations into a second consideration, concerning the irregular plantations of Churches by our brethren, but should follow amicable ways of arbitration by judicious brethren of both judgements antecedently to the Synods recognition. As also that we should concur with them in all effectual and orderly ways for purging out any insufficient or scandalous Ministers.

§. 50.

We hold it not necessary to discourse upon these our concessions, seeing we hope it will appear, we did stand upon nothing which might consist with the safety of Presbyterial Government, and with the simple not condemning of our own judgements in the matters of our publique differences, which (with more also) we did allow to our brethren. Nor shall we dive into the reasons which moved them to decline union upon so reasonable terms, or whether some among them were but too active to keep off others who were moderate: We might also clear how little they (or at least some of them) minded union all along, in that not only in the very time of the conference, they voiced and agreed upon the continuance of their pretended Commission, 1650. and did resolve and conclude to Petition the Council here, that power might be granted them to purge the Church; but in that all they seemed to concede, was qualified with this ambiguous Preface, *Of reserving the liberty of their judgement and practice in matters controverted as may consist with Truth and Peace*; upon which they would never give a clear Commentary though desired thereunto. But leaving these, we shall briefly declare what the particulars were upon which the union chiefly stuck.

§. 51.

1. Our Brethren would not condescend to any union, unless the Acts concerning the publique Resolutions, were rendered of no effect, so far as they do import or may be alleadged as the definitive judgement of this Church concerning the matters contained

contained therein : Which, however they glosse the matter in conference, was in effect, that we should condemn these Resolutions in our judgements, and should annul the authority of the Assembly which had determined them as the definitive judgement of the Church. This is no conjecture of our own, but clearly held out in their last Paper at that conference, wherein they complain of our not granting of this, as supposing and inferring not onely the constitution and authority of these Assemblies, but also (in shew and appearance) the justice and equity of these Resolutions. Whence any man may gather, that to grant their desire was not at all to suppose any Authority of these Assemblies, but not to leave the least shew of the justice and equity of these Resolutions. Which if it was to seek peace and union, and not rather that we should betray and yield up our judgements and the truth (as we believe) let any judge.

2. They would not unite, unlesse an extrajudicial Committee of equal members of both judgements were set up to manage the chief matters occuring in our Church ; Which unto us was a casting of the Government in a new Model, wholly overturning it, and enervating the Authority of Presbyteries and Synods, and allowing to our Brethren at least a negative voice in all matters. This we could not but look upon as a way of Government not warranted by the Word, and more tyrannical than the yoke of Prelacy. And though the whole number had been offered, to be men of our judgement, yet we could never hearken to a Proposition so destructive to the Government of the Church.

3. They declined also to engage themselves to that submission to the Government, and to observe that subordination of persons and judicatories in matters of Discipline, which we were willing should be mutual. And albeit we required nothing but what is essential to Presbyterian Government, and that which the Assembly, 1647. in the Act concerning the CXL Propositions, in the 7th head of Doctrine therein contained, doth approve ; And albeit their former actions had given us just cause to require the same might be secured for the future ; yet they did wholly decline it ; which was in effect to make all union void ; for had we agreed in all

§.52.

§.53:

all things beside, yet when they pleased, they might have slept out again at that door, and made the breach worse.

9.54-

We have thus briefly declared our mind in these matters of our differences, and given a true account of the consequences thereof, and of our carriage thereupon; Not (the Lord knoweth) to render the persons of our Brethren odious, nor to be an impediment to Union; but onely for our own vindication, and to prevent any prejudice to the cause of God and Government of this Church, through our silence, now when they are so active in prosecuting some designs prejudicial thereunto. As we have no greater ambition in the World, then to have this Church united in the judicatories thereof, in its former harmony and unity; and as we drive no particular interest, nor desire any thing but what tends to the common good of this whole Church, our Brethren as well as ours; So our hearts and armes are yet open and ready to embrace them upon safe terms, Providing they will not seek any thing irregular, and destructive to, or out of the channel of the Government. We are perswaded in our consciences that the discipline and government of this Church is agreeable to the Word, And we in this Nation are obliged by the Oath of God to the maintenance thereof, and to continue therein all the daies of our life: And therefore we cannot recede from it in the least, but are resolved in the Lords strength to adhere thereunto. And as our Brethren are engaged with us in this Bond (which makes their course the more sad, and grievous unto us;) So we cannot but expect to be encouraged, and countenanced in this Resolution by the People of God in the two neighbouring Nations, who are bound by the same Oath of God to maintain the Discipline and Government, established in this Church. But if our Brethren will still persist in their irregular designs, and if it please the Lord (for the further exercise of this poor Church) to permit them to proceed in them, and to overturn yet more the Government they are bound to maintain; We must leave the matter upon the Lord, and wait on him, contenting our selves that we have delivered our souls, and are not accessory nor consenting unto any such destructive innovations.

FINIS.

